



(S//SI) One-Year Anniversary for SUSLAG

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Special US Liaison Activity Germany has spent a year in a "tin can." (It's better than it sounds -- it's the nickname for their new facility!) (S//SI)

(S//SI) In April, the Special US Liaison Activity Germany (SUSLAG) celebrated one year in their purpose-built facility on the German Ministry of Defense facility Mangfall Kaserne in Bad Aibling, Germany. SUSLAG (formerly known as Combined Group Germany) was compelled to find a new home by the closure of its previous host, Bad Aibling Station.

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(S//SI) Thanks to the combined efforts of the Bad Aibling Transition Team, the Technical Support Program Management Office, Bundesnachrichtendienst (BND, the German intelligence service and our German partner), the European Technical Center (ETC), ITD, NCEUR, I&L**, and others too numerous to mention, the building was completed in just 4½ months, from groundbreaking to move-in, all during the depths of winter. (SUSLAG's BND colleagues affectionately refer to the new SUSLAG building as "Die Blechdose" or "the Tin Can," owing to its difference in appearance from the other buildings on Mangfall Kaserne -- it has no windows, is made of metal and is shelter-like in appearance). SUSLAG went off NSANET at Bad Aibling Station on Friday, 3 April 2004, and reappeared on NSANET in the new facility on the following Monday, thanks to an outstanding team of IT professionals working through the weekend.

(S//SI) In addition to SUSLAG's long-standing role as liaison to the German intelligence service, **it is parent to two exciting joint ventures, the Joint Analysis Center (JAC) and the Joint SIGINT Activity (JSA).**

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(S//SI) JSA, the JAC's younger sibling, was declared operational last year and continues to build toward full operating capability, which is expected by the end of 2005. The JSA is the outcome of an agreement between the Director, NSA, and the President of the BND to launch a strategic cooperation initiative in the mutual pursuit of intelligence related to counterterrorism, counterproliferation, and other transnational targets.

(S//SI) With the establishment of a US-only communications center in the new SUSLAG facility, it became possible to provide secure connectivity for JSA, piggy-backing on SUSLAG's connection to ETC, at which point the JSA comms pass through ETC's Third-Party guard device subsystem onto NSANET. This provided for the first time an electronic connection from NSA to JSA for tasking to flow in one direction, and SIGINT in the other. JSA is primarily a SIGDEV asset from NSA's point of view, but is an essential component of BND's collection architecture. JSA is unique as a jointly manned, jointly tasked DNI site.

(S//SI) Following DIRNSA's dictum that making our foreign partners more capable also makes NSA more capable, NSA personnel assigned to JSA are teaching their BND counterparts new tools and techniques in advanced signals and protocol analysis and DNI exploitation. But this is far more than an academic exercise -- training is being conducted in the course of executing tasked mission, currently one NSA and two BND tasks. BND senior leadership recently commended JSA for their efforts, particularly the contribution that JSA's Afghan GSM** task has made to one of BND's highest priority task, Force Protection in Afghanistan. [FORNSAT/SCS Mission Management](#) has assigned primary responsibility to JSA for 10 beams on seven satellites, and JSA is continually surveying these beams and feeding the resulting metadata to NSA systems.

(S//SI) **SUSLAG continues in its traditional role as SIGINT liaison** to the Federal Republic of Germany. This role has been greatly facilitated by SUSLAG's new location on Mangfall Kaserne. NSA personnel interact daily with BND counterparts, coordinating policy, conducting technical exchanges, expanding the range of cooperation in SIGINT, and deepening the partnership in many ways. The availability of SUSLAG's secure VTC facility on Mangfall Kaserne allows for a close and continuing exchange with our partner based on an unprecedented series of VTCs. Additionally, visiting NSA technical experts have immediate access to BND counterparts, providing for an unmatched exchange of expertise.

(S//SI) SUSLAG is now established on a solid foundation for years to come. In the past year, DIRNSA, SID's Deputy Director, and the Principal Director of Foreign Affairs have visited to add emphasis to their charge to Chief, SUSLAG to broaden and deepen the SIGINT relationship with the German partner, moving in new and exciting directions. These efforts have already begun to bear fruit, and the future of this productive partnership seems assured.

**(U) Notes:

ITD = Information Technology Directorate

NCEUR = NSA/CSS Europe

I&L = Installations & Logistics

GSM = a type of digital cellular comms (Global System for Mobile Communications)

(U//FOUO) This article is reprinted from May's *Foreign Affairs Digest*

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